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CORNELL UNIVERSITY :

# Its Significance and Its Scope.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE SIXTH ANNUAL BANQUET AND RECEPTION  
OF THE NEW YORK ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF CORNELL  
UNIVERSITY, AT DELMONICO'S, IN NEW YORK CITY,  
MARCH, 31, 1886.

By CHARLES KENDALL ADAMS, LL. D.,  
*President of the University.*

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ITHACA, N. Y.  
ANDRUS & CHURCH,  
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# CORNELL UNIVERSITY :

## ITS SIGNIFICANCE AND ITS SCOPE.

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The Sixth Annual Banquet of the New York Association of Cornell Alumni was held at Delmonico's on the evening of March 31, 1886. Before the Banquet a Reception was given to President Adams in the parlors of the hotel. The number seated at the tables was one hundred and ninety-eight. Eugene Frayer, Esq., President of the New York Association presided. President Adams responded to the toast "The University." After the long-continued applause which greeted his introduction had subsided, he spoke as follows :

### ADDRESS OF PRESIDENT ADAMS.

MR. PRESIDENT ; AND SONS OF CORNELL :—

I am really embarrassed by the heartiness of your reception. If I felt your warm and welcome greeting less, I should be better able to thank you adequately for it. If I could separate from this occasion all thoughts of myself, and in some impersonal way join with you simply in your expressions of admiration and good will for the noble university to which we are all so much attached, I should be glad to mingle my heartiest applause with yours, and give myself up to the full enjoyments of the hour. But to tell you the truth, I come before you to-night with conflicting emotions. When I received your invitation to be the guest of the evening, my first feeling was akin to what I imagine the feeling of one of those African chiefs to be, who is required, after his choice to some high office, to go through a very severe experimental ordeal. As perhaps you all remember, he is sometimes required to perform some extraordinary feat ; sometimes it

is by running a foot-race while encouraged by the goadings and proddings of his friends; sometimes by wrestling with the champion of the ring; sometimes by walking over heated stones; and sometimes even by being dipped into a river full of crocodiles. Now, a foot-race I thought I could undertake, especially if there were no Hudson between here and my home; I have seen wrestling done, and I think I could do that; but to be dipped into a river of hungry and open-mouthed crocodiles, it seemed to me, would be paying a pretty large price for an office, even in New York.

Now, I suppose I do not need to tell you that this last operation, this crocodile experiment, was precisely the ordeal which came up to my mind when I was invited to a banquet by the Cornell Alumni of New York.\* This was my first conflicting emotion.

My second was when the amiable and enticing words of the President and of the Secretary came to shake my considerations of prudence. For I could not help remembering the honied assurances with which those two models of piety and propriety, Alexander VI. and Cæsar Borgia, used to persuade their guests into their power. And when I was assured, as I was, that the number present was likely to be very large, how could I help remembering the five hundred thousand that went to see the first railroad train, as they said, "to be in at the death"?

But I wish to be perfectly honest, and I warn you that I have taken the necessary precautions. I have watched the President of the New York Alumni very closely, and I have not eaten anything till after he has tasted it. I have drunken nothing till after he has drained his glass. And so I live in the comfort of thinking that if I am to die as the result of this indiscretion, I shall at least have the satisfaction of seeing him die first. You must all admit that that would be ample compensation.

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\* After the Resignation of President White a small number of very energetic New York Alumni had a meeting and sent a delegate to Ithaca to represent to the Board of Trustees that the interests of the University would not be subserved by the election of Professor Adams to the Presidency.

But, my friends, notwithstanding the precautionary measures I have deemed it necessary to take in coming to the New York Alumni, I am really glad to be with you. In spite of all my misgivings, I am really proud to be connected with an institution which, while still in its teens, can make such a showing as this. Cornell University, if I remember rightly, was formally opened to students in 1868, and I submit that if a mother of eighteen can show a progeny like this, about two hundred, what will she not be able to show in the way of a family by the time she reaches the venerable grandmotherhood of some of her contemporaries? It is plain that when that day comes, we shall have to desert the provincial East, and seek the more ample accommodations of some western town. For suitable accommodations, we shall perhaps have to betake us to the more ambitious largeness of Chicago, or Kansas City, or even spread ourselves over Minneapolis and St. Paul.

Perhaps there will be an appropriateness in this, as I see that our venerable sister on the Sound, by her latest survey has established the geographical position of Cornell as *in the West*. As I read the other day the account of Professor Fisher's remarks at the Yale meeting in this city, I was in great doubt how to interpret his words. I rubbed my eyes, and recalled the days when it was a part of my work to examine young geographers for admission to college; and I remembered with what exquisite confidence those prodigies of innovation were accustomed to locate Florence on the Rhine, Harrisburg on the Hudson, and New Haven on the St. Lawrence. But I am sure no imagination less fertile than that of a very *Eastern* Yale professor ever before supposed that Cornell University was *in the West*.

The first explanation that occurred to me, was the possibility that Yale College, in her predominant devotion to the classics, had never heard of any Ithaca excepting that which used to lie, I believe, at the west of Greece.

There is another possible explanation of this modern geography. It was Emerson, I believe, who said of England, "there is more of her than you can see, and therefore she is good as the infinite." There is more even of Connecticut than you can see (especially if

you are near-sighted), and, therefore, why is she not as good as the infinite? In fact, to no small part of her people I believe she *is* the infinite. Her borders, therefore, are infinitely remote, and who can blame anyone when he looks far out into the borders and fringe of infinity, if he mistakes the Berkshire hills for the Rocky Mountains, or the Mighty Housatonic for the mighty Mississippi? Do you not all remember that Cobden told Goldwin Smith that not a student at the great Oxford knew the location within 500 miles even of Chicago? And did we not hear in a great German University in the time of our war that the North never could put down the South, because of the difficulty of moving troops along the Isthmus of Darien? After all, knowledge is only relative, and why should we hold an American professor to knowing everything?

But then, it has occurred to me that possibly after all, this distinguished professor was simply endeavoring to inculcate a moral lesson. He is a distinguished theologian; he has written ever so many excellent theologico-historical and historico-theological books, and has just given us the very best general history ever written in English. So the presumption, after all, is strong that he knows what he is talking about. He must have deliberately concluded that although the scientific experts persist in regarding the geographical centre of the country as in Kansas, and, although General Walker, whom some of you have heard of—Mr. Warner, I know has\*—in that great book of his on the census, tells us that the centre of population is some miles west of Cincinnati, notwithstanding these facts, I say, Dr. Fisher must have come to the conclusion that the intellectual body of the nation is still lying along the salt water of New England, and, therefore, that everything beyond the Berkshire Hills and the Mighty Housatonic must be regarded as in the West.

It is not becoming in us to quarrel with this conclusion; but we must admit that this geographical peculiarity brings to us with it certain enlarged responsibilities. If the *viri reverendi* who hold the destinies of Yale College in their hand, deliberately determine

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\*At the time of the election of President Adams, two votes were cast for Gen. F. A. Walker, of the Boston Institute of Technology, one of which was supposed to be cast by Mr. Warner.



to adapt the sphere of their educational activities to the Nutmeg State, why I suppose we shall have to content ourselves chiefly with the limited educational sphere that lies beyond. Sad as it may be to think of, we shall have to put up for the most part with that fragment of the nation which lies between the Mighty Housatonic and the setting sun.

Now, if such responsibilities are to be thrust upon us, how are we to meet them? If we have to limit our educational activities to the needs of the people west of the Housatonic, how are we to do it? How do our history and our present condition fit us for this work? Are we under bonds to teach one class of studies even though all others perish, and the people of this limited west starve for knowledge; or, *can* we, without violating our obligations to the Nation and to the State, teach all of those branches which these American people west of the Housatonic need to have taught? In other words, to state the question plainly, is Cornell University a technical school, with certain ornamental adjuncts, or is it a UNIVERSITY, with all the rights and obligations that the name implies?

In order to answer these questions I must ask you to indulge me in a little bit of sober reminiscence; for the obligations of Cornell, like those of every other important institution, are shaped and defined by the circumstances of its organization, and by the course of its history.

Everybody, I think, has been made aware that the beginning of Cornell University was the result of the coming together of several forces, the controlling ones of which were the Morrill Grant of 1862, the personality of Ezra Cornell, and the personality of Andrew D. White.

The Morrill Grant was a great act of statemanship passed in the midst of the carnage and turmoil of the civil war. Well might the enactment of this law remind one of the sale of the Roman lands upon which Hannibal's army stood when that great warrior was before the gates of the city.

The purpose of that act was broadly but plainly expressed. Its fundamental intent was embodied in the oft quoted words: "the endowment, support, and maintenance of at least one college

where the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies, and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts in such manner as the legislatures of the States may respectively prescribe, in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions of life.”

Thus the general government said to the State of New York, “Take this grant, found with it a college in which agriculture and the mechanic arts with such other studies as may be practicable shall be taught. Take the 990,000 acres and devote them to this purpose.” Such was the message of the general government.

Now, the importance of this gift of course depends on its value. What was its value? What was this land scrip worth? The State not having land in its own borders, subject to location, was obliged to sell the scrip at the market price. It fixed the price at first at eighty-five cents an acre, but very little was sold, for the reason that other States had thrown their scrip upon the market, and the market was glutted. If there should be great delay, the desirable lands would all be located, and the price would go down to next to nothing. The price, in consequence of all these efforts, was soon borne down to about fifty cents per acre; and there appeared to be no possible way in which the State could realize more than that amount from the federal grant. The State could not hold it without loss, it could not locate the lands under any circumstances, so it had no option. It was obliged to sell the land scrip at the market price whatever that was. The amount realized, therefore, by the State from the general government for educational purposes was simply and solely the 990,000 acres at from 50 to 85 cents, or an average of about 60 cents per acre. I know of no mathematics by which the value of the grant, therefore, can be figured out at more than six hundred thousand dollars. That amount, then, fairly and generously represented the measure of the obligations of Cornell University to the federal government.

Treated and disposed of as the other States treated and disposed of their scrip, the grant to New York could not possibly have been made to amount to more than that sum. Let us, there-

fore, in our educational book-keeping put down six hundred thousand dollars to the credit of the general government. In other words, the institution established under that grant to the State of New York was bound to furnish six hundred thousand dollars worth of education in the exact spirit of the terms of the grant.

Now we come to the second factor in the creation of our endowment. Ezra Cornell, through his energy and enterprise in connection with the establishment of the electric telegraph in the United States, had become suddenly rich. He, and Andrew D. White, were in the state senate when the disposition of this grant had to be determined. The State had offered the grant to the Peoples' College at Havana, and had said to them, "You may have it, if you will establish, independently of this grant, a preliminary institution which all told, will cost about \$170,000." For three years the friends of the Peoples' College endeavored to comply with these conditions in vain. And so the State had to make other disposition of the federal fund. Then Mr. Cornell, encouraged, it may well be believed, by the inspiring influence of Mr. White, said to the legislature, "If you will adopt a charter acceptable to me, I will add \$500,000 to the sum granted by the general government. What I desire that charter to be, may be expressed in a single sentence, 'I would found an institution where any person can find instruction in any study.'"

Now, you will not fail to observe that this simple but noble statement embodied within it an idea somewhat different from that which had found expression in the federal grant. While it did not exclude or in any way antagonize the federal idea, it supplemented that idea by giving to it a far greater breadth, in fact an absolute comprehensiveness. He did not say, I would found an institution where any person can find instruction in any *science*, or in any *literature*, or in any *handicraft*, but "in any study." The institution if it accepts my offer must have the broadest conceivable foundation, must be reared in a spirit of the utmost liberality, must have in its purpose the encouragement of all knowledge. Thus he declared that the institution he would found must have all the comprehensiveness of the old university, which had for its domain and its sphere nothing less than universal knowledge, and

which, because of the universality of its scope, was called a university. *Without* his grant the institution with its \$600,000 from the general government might, indeed, teach agriculture and the mechanic arts, without excluding classical and liberal studies ; but *with* his grant, it must put no limit to the breadth of its scope and the comprehensiveness of its purpose. It could never completely fulfill his desire till within its precincts "any person could find instruction in any study."

This was Mr. Cornell's noble conception ; this was the simple condition he imposed.

The State of New York accepted this condition, and accordingly we find, that, without abrogating or in any way interfering with the purpose expressed in the general grant, that purpose was supplemented with an additional statement evidently designed to give scope to Mr. Cornell's comprehensive idea. After repeating the purpose expressed in the federal grant, this significant sentence was added : "but such branches of science and knowledge may be embraced in the plan of instruction and investigation pertaining to the University, as the Trustees deem useful and proper." Here is the warrant of its comprehensiveness.

Now, an examination of the charter of the University, thus prepared to fulfill all the requirements of the general government on the one hand and of Mr. Cornell on the other, will reveal the fact that there are three distinct ideas incorporated in this document. What I believe the philosophers would call the final cause, the primary design of the University, was expressed in these words, "in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions of life." This was the design, the final cause, and it was to be realized by the means indicated in the sentence declaring that the leading object of the corporation should be to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts, in connection with military tactics ; and then, finally, there was pointed out the way in which this instruction should be supplemented as explained in the clause which I quoted a moment ago. Here, then, in the charter were embodied both the ideas of the land grant of 1862, and the ideas of Mr. Cornell. The charter was of

the nature of a mutual contract between the State on the one hand, and Mr. Cornell on the other. Mr. Cornell agreed to give \$500,000 on condition that the charter should be adopted, and, on the other hand, the charter expressly provided that it should become of binding force only after the \$500,000 had been paid. Thus the charter assumed the nature of a contract of perpetual obligation. Thus we find embodied in the form of a fundamental law, both the design of the federal government and all the comprehensive desires of Mr. Cornell.

And now I come to speak of the third factor which entered into the fundamental ideas of this University.

In the Senate of New York with Mr. Cornell, as I have already said, was Andrew D. White. He was the chairman of the Committee on Education, and to his hands was entrusted the shaping of the legislation that should make this grant available to the State. If there was any man that knew what the purposes of Mr. Cornell were, what the spirit of the federal act was, and what the charter of the University really meant, Mr. White was that man. Indeed, the form which Mr. Cornell's ideas took was very largely, at least, Mr. White's work. Now, how does he interpret that work? After the charter had been adopted, it fell to his lot to draw up a Report on the Organization of the University; and on the fourth page of that Report I find that he felt called upon to interpret the real meaning of the University, because, even then there seemed to be conflicting opinions as to whether we were to have simply a technical school or a university in the broadest sense.

Here are his words :

‘ Even if it should be claimed that the whole effort of the Trustees ought to be devoted to agriculture and the mechanic arts alone; even if we should construe away the plain words of the original act of Congress, which speaks of ‘ other scientific and classical branches ’ as part of the object of the government grant of lands, still, the oft repeated declaration of our founder, that he wishes to make such provision that every person can find opportunity here to pursue any study he desires, would be our sufficient warrant in using at least his munificent gift in supplementing the

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special instruction with general instruction and rounding it out into the proportions of an University.”

In these words of President White, for he had then, I believe, become President, we have the most authoritative interpretation possible of the meaning and the obligations of the University. His judgment was, that, even if all the liberal clauses of the federal grant were to be swept aside, we should still have sufficient warrant in using at least Mr. Cornell's gift in rounding out the institution into a University.

And this brings us to inquire as to the extent, real and moral, of Mr. Cornell's gift.

I said that he gave \$500,000, but this really was only a beginning of his devotion and liberality. When the University was opened, its possessions, including the federal grant and the gift of Mr. Cornell amounted to about \$1,100,000. How did they afterward come to be so largely increased? The answer is, that it was chiefly through the effort of Mr. Cornell. The story is one of the most interesting in the history of the University, and it is one which enormously increases our obligations to revere his services and his name.

The State, it must be remembered, could not locate the lands, but was obliged to sell the land scrip at whatever it would fetch. Mr. Cornell perceived that by judicious location of the lands an enormous profit could ultimately be realized either for the University, or for such persons as might hold the scrip; and so, with a largeness of view and a generosity of purpose, which can never be too much admired or too highly praised, he said to the State: “I will take the scrip at the market price. I will locate the lands according to the best judgment I possess or can command. I will make no charge for my services. I will give an acceptable bond to the Comptroller of the State to pay into the Treasury for the use of the University, all the profits that can be realized from the sale of the lands.

The State took him at his word. He went to the Northwest, and wherever he could find an exceptionally valuable piece of pine land, he made it the property of the University.

Thus the 990,000 acres were located. But while the Trustees



and Mr. Cornell were waiting for the prices of pine lands to bring some return, the University had to live on its million of dollars. Large expenditures were made for buildings. Flocks of students, smitten with the liberal ideas of the new institution, thronged its doors and crowded its limited accommodations. Numerous professors were appointed, in the confident hope that a sale of lands could soon be made that would bring relief. But the hard times of '73 came on, and for eight years, Cornell University, though the world knew nothing of it, was silently carrying on a hard fight against bankruptcy. During that period the Trustees were confronted with this terrible alternative ; either sell the lands for next to nothing, throw them away for the little pittance they would bring, or silently hold on till better times should come, paying meagre salaries, letting their best professors go, if need be, heedless of loud complaints of alumni and other good friends, provided only, by hook or by crook, the institution could be tided over into that fair future, when a pine tree would be worth something in the market, and the treasury could be replenished.

Surely, it was a heroic fight, more heroic than the world has ever supposed. For, again and again, the Trustees, with Mr. Cornell at their head, found no way of paying the salaries and the other bills, excepting by plunging their hands deep into their own pockets. At one time, simply as individuals, they gave \$170,000, on security that was worthless in the market. At another time they contributed \$150,000 as an absolute gift, simply to tide over the emergencies of the hard times. At length the resources of Mr. Cornell gave out, and after he had broken his fortune in paying the taxes on these lands ; and, worse than all else, had broken his health in the service of the University, and in his anxiety for it, he said to the Trustees : "You must take this land off my hands for I can carry it no longer." And as he was going down into his grave, still burdened with this great load, almost his last words were, "Don't give up my policy. The lands will yet be worth three millions of dollars."

In all that struggle there were differences of opinion, but, as it seems to me now, there was only one moment of real weakness. Perhaps even *that* was not a moment of weakness. Consider the

real situation. The terrible times between '73 and '81 were fast wearing out the resources of the University. The only possible way of paying the bills was by using the money—the *principal*, not the interest—realized from the sale of lands. It is simply truth to say that the University was running behind hand at the rate of about seventy-five thousand dollars a year. It was easy to see that at the rate at which the funds were going, if the hard times should continue, in about twelve years *the whole of the capital of the University would be exhausted*. This, too, you will note, was at the very moment when alumni and others were clamoring for the raising of salaries and the strengthening of the material equipment of the University. When affairs were in this condition an offer came of a million and a quarter of dollars for the timbered lands of the University. Now, what was the University to do? A million and a quarter of dollars would give an income of sixty or seventy thousand dollars a year. But there would be no ground ever to hope for an income greater than that amount. Cornell University then would sink at once into the rank of respectable mediocrity among the minor colleges of the land. But so much would at least be secure.

On the other hand, what was the prospect if the lands should not be sold? The answer is that if the hard times should continue, either the teaching force would have to be greatly reduced, or in ten or fifteen years the University would practically be without a dollar. If, on the contrary, business should revive, and the demand for pine lands should be greatly increased, the value of the property would doubtless be considerably more than the million and a quarter of dollars offered. Here then was the dilemma. Here were two considerations the one appealing to what may be called the *prudent* element of the Board of Trustees, the other appealing to what may be called the *hopeful* and *courageous* element. Prudence said : Sell your lands ; and put your million and a quarter of dollars into safe investments. Better have half a loaf than no bread. Courage and Hope said : On the contrary, hold your lands ; these hard times will surely pass and a higher value will surely come. It is not strange that the Trustees were divided in opinion, as to which would be the wiser course. Who will say



that it was not better to err on the side of extreme prudence than on the side of over confident hope? The considerations of prudence prevailed. A majority of the Board of Trustees decided to accept the offer for all the lands, requiring a deposit of a hundred thousand dollars within sixty days. Further time was asked for, and thirty days more were given.

And now came one of those interpositions,—of chance, as some would call it, or, as I prefer to believe, of a kindly Providence in behalf of the University,—that have so often seemed to favor its history. The company which had agreed to take the lands at a million and a quarter of dollars was unable to raise the amount of the required deposit. The time of the second refusal elapsed and then the University declined to repeat the offer. Symptoms of better times were now a little more apparent, and the Trustees accordingly decided to hold the lands for a higher price. The offer at a million and a quarter held good up to May of 1881. At the June meeting the Trustees voted to put up the price of the lands; and before a year had elapsed it became sufficiently apparent that the property would sell for three or four times as much as in 1880 it had been offered for. Indeed I believe that before June of 1882, the Trustees had made sales for some two and a quarter millions of dollars, and had enough left to make it certain that Mr. Cornell's figures were in no way extravagant.

Such was the result of what may be called Mr. Cornell's policy; and such is Mr. Cornell's title to our grateful recognition and remembrance. But for him there might, indeed, have been, somewhere in New York, a struggling college of agriculture and the mechanic arts, but there would have been no University. As the years go on his title to grateful remembrance will be more and more recognized, and in any educational Walhalla that may be established the name of Cornell will be entitled, from every consideration, to a high and most honorable place.

“Untaught,—and yet he drew  
Best learning out of life,  
More than the scholars knew,  
With all their toil and strife.”

And the title he has to fame is the exact measure of the respect we owe to his expressed desires. As it is not the original giver of the lands of a State, that is to be regarded as the chief factor in the greatness of a State, but rather those who plan and accomplish its development, so in an educational institution, it is not the material possibilities, but rather the thought and the wisdom that lay hold of those possibilities and develop them into actual reality that should awaken our highest gratitude. But when, as in the case of Mr. Cornell, we see that we have at once a material gift equal to that of the general government, and a wisdom in the care and enlargement of the whole, which results in making the endowment threefold what it otherwise would have been, we begin to get a just measure of the obligations that rest upon us.

Thus is the character of Cornell University defined. The moment the State accepted Mr. Cornell's gift, the institution ceased in any exclusive, or even predominant sense, to be a technical school. At that moment it became in fact, as in name, a University, with all that the term implies. In the other states, where institutions have been founded exclusively on the grant of 1862, such institutions have sometimes been schools simply of Agriculture and the Mechanic Arts. But in New York, where the State is under far larger obligations to Mr. Cornell than to the general government, it would be nothing less than a plain abuse of the trust confided to us, if we should cramp the scope of the University within any such limits.

Fortunately, my friends, we are under no such necessity, I might, perhaps, say, under no such temptation. Thanks to the wise management of the Trustees, and I ought to add, to the wise generosity of such men as Cornell, and McGraw, and Sage, and Sibley, and White, the University has been able, at least in some reasonable degree, to satisfy both of these demands.

The Technical Departments have not been neglected, and will not be. The department of Mechanic Arts, aside from the larger gifts of Mr. Sibley, has received during the past year from the general fund of the University, \$23,500 for additional equipment alone. It has been put in such a condition that it is no vain boast to say, that within the broad scope of its activity, it is one

of the most perfectly equipped, and, even in the presence of our blushing Director, I may say, one of the most energetically and efficiently manned in the country.

The kindred departments of Architecture and Civil Engineering had already been put into a condition of most admirable efficiency.

The new laboratory of Chemistry and Physics has been built and equipped at an expenditure of \$143,900, and the Trustees have already committed themselves to the policy of making the corps of instruction entirely commensurate with the enlarged material equipment.

The same spirit prevails towards the Department of Agriculture. I would not wrong my good friend and neighbor, Professor Roberts, whose heart always longs for better things, by saying that our ambitions in an agricultural direction are fully satisfied. They are not. We are looking for more light and more strength, and especially are we looking for the means of giving the results of our labors to the world. But even in our present condition, I am bold to challenge comparison with any other agricultural college in the land. So long as our Agricultural Faculty is made up of men like Roberts, and Caldwell, and Law, and Prentiss, and Comstock, every one of whom is an authority wherever in this country scientific agriculture is respected, there can be no just criticism of our teaching force. We may also challenge comparison in the matter of our material equipment. If there are any better barns, if any finer herd of stock, if any larger crops per acre, if any more neatly kept fields, I know not where among agricultural colleges to find them. A college thus equipped and thus manned need not be sensitive to petty criticism. A department that last year in addition to all of its teaching produced upon its own farm 40 bushels of wheat per acre, 40 tons of beets per acre, and 400 bushels of potatoes per acre, is in no great danger from those prudent critics who never come to see us, and who never trouble the soil.

It is quite possible that in one respect the Agricultural Department has made a mistake. It has, perhaps, set too high a mark. It has, possibly, undertaken to exact too much of its students. Experiment shows that not many farmers' sons can spend four years

in college, unless they determine not to be farmers. Perhaps special courses should be offered for the larger accommodation of those who are not candidates for a degree. But that is a fault, if it be a fault, that leans to virtue's side, and is easily corrected. Our task would be light indeed, if we had nothing more difficult to do than to lower the requirements in order to adapt them to the wants of a larger *clientèle*.

I have spoken thus of the Technical Departments in order to show that they are not suffering and are not likely to suffer at our hands.

But if I am correct in my interpretation of our obligations, these departments must not monopolize our attention and our support. We must fill up the full measure of our obligations to them, but we must remember the larger field that must be opened, before we can make it otherwise than a mockery to say that Cornell is a place where any person can find instruction in any study.

It has not been my purpose here to-night to forecast the future, to describe even the present ; but simply to explain what I conceive to be the nature of the obligations that rest upon us, and the spirit in which the future of the University ought to be developed. I have undertaken simply to explain what I conceive to be the significance and the scope of the University.

A single word in regard to what has been done the present year, and I will retire into golden silence. As Carlyle says near the close of his French Revolution, "Courage, O patient listener ! I see land."

In the course of the present year we have, I hope, done some good things ; but I should be unjust to my own conscience, if I did not say that they had almost without exception been prepared to our hands. Everything has gone along so easily, so absolutely without friction, that it seems to me the figure which will best describe the situation is simply to say that the fruit was ripe and ready to drop, and that all we have had to do has been to catch the fruit and carry it safely in. Under the wise and devoted husbandry of my predecessor, the ground had been so thoroughly prepared, the fruit had been so carefully grown, and the crops had been so admirably ripened, that the process of the gathering in

has been, it seems to me, a sort of recreating picnic, which has been easy for everybody, and which, I think, everybody has rather enjoyed. It cannot be denied that even this humble process has been a busy one, but there has been no skulking, and no lack at any point of a spirit of hearty coöperation on the part of either Trustees, or Faculty, or students.

And now, my friends, in closing, it only remains to thank you, as I do thank from a full heart, for this magnificent reception. My only regret is the absence of him whose wisdom, after all, has had far more than mine to do with the making of whatever the successes of the present year have been. It is to him that your acknowledging and encouraging plaudits are chiefly due ; and I could not appropriate them to myself without a sense of gross injustice.

And now as a final word, I would condense my whole speech into the sentiment :

“**CORNELL UNIVERSITY**, so nobly founded by Ezra Cornell and so wisely moulded by Andrew D. White—may she ever be the patron of all knowledge, and that of the best !”





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